north of Italy offers the best chance of anything in the nature of a really big gain of ground."

Sir Ian Hamilton was not a civilian politican, but a soldier with a distinguished record. He was perhaps better fitted for a Staff post than for a Commander in the field. He had acted as Chief of Staff to Lord Kitchener in South Africa, had been a member of the Army Council, and for five years, 1910-1915, was Inspector-General of our Overseas Forces, in addition to having commanded British forces in many campaigns. He was the only leading soldier who had actually seen and made a careful study of modern warfare. He saw the great battles of the Russo-Japanese War. He was certainly not the sort of person whose considered judgment on questions of military strategy could lightly be brushed aside ; and this makes his support for my proposal of an Italian campaign the more impressive.

Pétain and two other French Generals recommended the same plan in March as an alternative to the Nivelle offensive. The Rome proposal is taken out of the category of amateur strategy by the approval of these distinguished military leaders.